



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Point Reyes National Seashore News Release

September 30, 2003
For Immediate Release
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Rural Fire Assistance Grants Provided to Fire Departments Near Point Reyes National Seashore

The National Park Service announced today that three fire departments near Point Reyes National Seashore have received grants for Rural Fire Assistance in conjunction with the National Fire Plan.

Inverness Public Utility District received \$5,840 for wildland personal protective clothing and a hose roller. Bolinas Fire Protection District received \$9,758 for wildland personal protective clothing, hardhats, wildland goggles, gloves and headlamps. Nicasio Volunteer Fire Department received \$13,064 for wildland personal protective clothing, wildland fire hose, wildland foam nozzles, drip torches, backpack pump, wildland handtools, drafting suction hose and funding to install a wildland foam injection unit on their brush rig.


The Department of the Interior Rural Fire Assistance Program is an important component of the National Fire Plan which assists rural fire departments in meeting basic needs for equipment, training and prevention activities. The RFA program was initiated to improve local fire protection capacity in rural areas which often rely heavily on volunteer firefighting forces. The safety of both rural and cooperating federal firefighters is enhanced when local departments are fully equipped with the proper personal protective equipment and essential tools for wildland firefighting.

Roger Wong, Fire Management Officer at Point Reyes National Seashore commented, "Safety is the first priority in all firefighting operations. One of the best things the National Fire Plan can do is to make sure all personnel involved in wildland firefighting have proper training and equipment. We are fortunate to have many dedicated local firefighters in the vicinity of Point Reyes National Seashore who provide us with many services. The RFA Program is a great way for us to be able to give back something in return."

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The Rural Fire Assistance Program was initiated in the wake of the 2000 fire season, when Congress recognized that safe and effective protection in the wildland-urban interface requires close coordination among local, state, Tribal and federal firefighting resources. Additionally, Congress acknowledged that rural and volunteer fire departments responding to wildland fires needed to improve overall firefighter safety and augment their wildland fire protection capabilities. To this end, Congress authorized establishment of the RFA Program and appropriated \$10 million to the Department of the Interior to initiate the program.

The RFA program provides funding for equipment, training, fire prevention, and fuel mitigation activities for those rural/volunteer fire departments that protect rural communities and play a substantial cooperative role in the suppression of wildland fires in, on, or near Department of the Interior (DOI) lands.

Jim Fox, Chief of Operations for Inverness Public Utility District and Fire Chief for Inverness Volunteer Fire Department, said, "The RFA program is greatly needed. We don't have a budget for wildland firefighting equipment. We are stretched as it is to provide basic structural fire protection service for the 550 residences in Inverness. Since we are surrounded by national and state park wildlands, we need to be able to fight wildland fire, in addition to structural fire."

According to Joe Runyon, Nicasio Volunteer Fire Chief, "The Rural Fire Assistance Program is helping our department grow and be better prepared for wildland fire. It is easier to attract volunteers when we can provide proper equipment and training."

Anita Brown, Acting Chief for Bolinas Fire Protection District also stated, "We have a strong cooperative relationship with the National Park Service. The RFA Program supports our ability to be prepared for wildland fire. By working together, we can provide the best service and fire protection for the communities in West Marin."

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